

EXHIBIT

DATE

2/2/07

HB

403

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Testimony against HB 403

February 2, 2007

Members of the committee: My name is Wade Sikorski. I live on the family ranch in southeastern Montana. I have Ph.D. in political theory, and I am deeply concerned about amending the heart and soul of Montana's Constitution to reflect the extremist religious beliefs contained in this bill.

As a political theorist, I have thought long and hard on what it means to be a human being, also on the consequences of defining a human being as being human from the moment of conception, and as a created being, as opposed to say, an evolved being. By making the moment of conception the defining moment in what it means to be human, the point at which life as a human being begins, the bill has implications that go far beyond abolishing abortion.

In saying that all persons are created free, as opposed to born free, the bill is shifting the language of the constitution from being relatively neutral to most belief systems to invoking a highly charged system of patriarchal theological obligations. Ironically, the bill would take away our freedom at precisely the moment it would grant it. We may be created free, as the bill proposes, and the moment of conception is what makes us free, but we must have no control over this moment, giving complete control over to our creator, the divine being who supposedly intends our creation. This bill would have all Montanans submit to this creator's will, as interpreted, no doubt, by the supporters of this bill.

Far from making us free, this bill would take our freedom away, turning Montana into a theocracy. Once this theology of conception becomes the defining moment of our existence, and requires our political submission to this hypothesized creator, every aspect of our lives will unravel into it. Having invaded our most intimate moments, and assumed control over them, this theology of conception will have the authority to intervene everywhere else.

The purpose of this amendment is not just to abolish abortion; it is to assert expansive control over virtually every aspect of our lives. It is a radical power grab by the religious right. I urge you to refuse it.